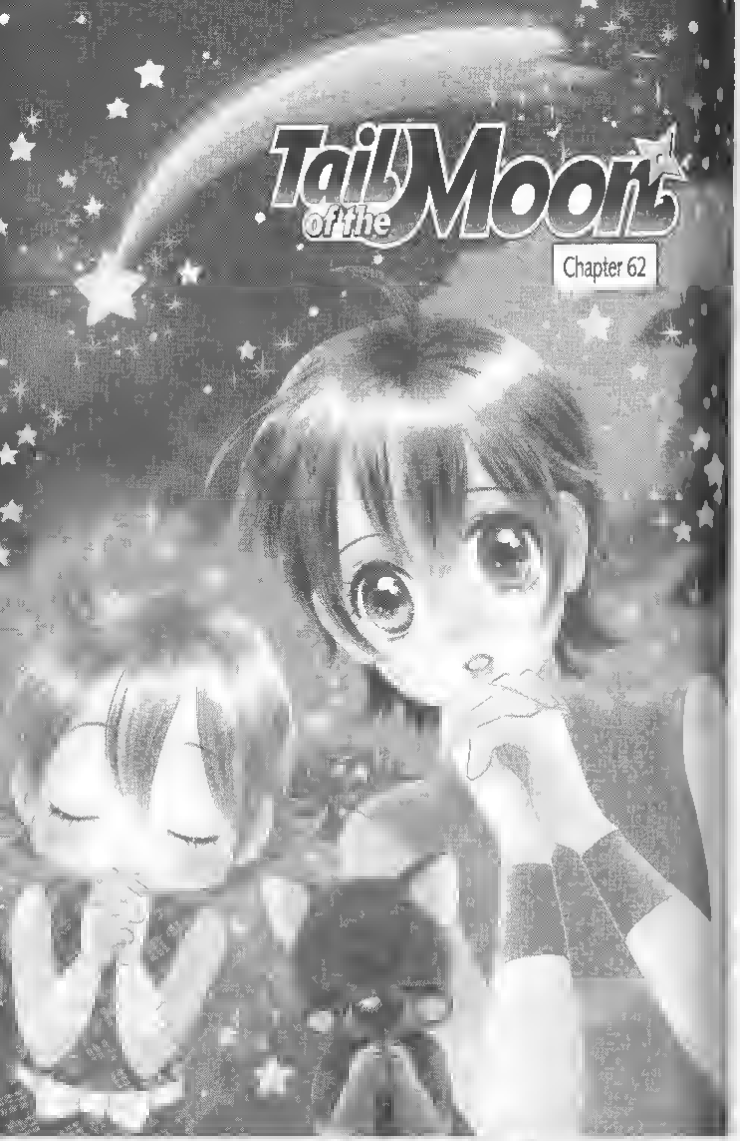

TAIL OF THE MOON EXTRA: TODAY'S MISSION

"I WANT TO SEE HANZO IN A RABBIT COSTUME!"

-KAOTAMU, IBARAKI PREFECTURE

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I WANT TO SEE WATARI MORE OFTEN...
...BUT I CAN'T...
MA-MEZO...
I WANT YOU TO THINK OF THE KANJI CHARACTER FOR "NINJA."
ALL NINJA MUST REMAIN CALM AT HEART, EVEN WHEN A SHARP BLADE IS BEING POINTED AT YOU.
NO, IT'S "BLADE."
A "HEART"..
...AND A "SWORD"?
THAT'S FINE.
PHEW

NO...
MA-MEZO. .
DID YOU SAY ANYTHING ABOUT US...?
A FRIEND...?
OH!
BUT I DID TELL HIM THAT LISA AND YOU ARE MY MOMMY AND DADDY...
HIS NAME'S WATARI AND HE'S REALLY KIND.

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NINJA ARE NOT NORMAL HUMANS.
WE LIVE FOR THE PEOPLE...
...AND DIE FOR THE PEOPLE
THAT IS WHAT MY LATE FATHER TAUGHT ME.
ONLY BY ENDURING DIFFICULTIES...
...CAN PEOPLE BECOME STRONG.
WHAT DID YOU TWO TALK ABOUT?
IT'S A SECRET...
TELL ME ...!!
DON'T...
DON'T PICK ON MAMEZO!
ALL RIGHT.
I WANT YOU TO DELIVER THIS LETTER TO MASTER TANBA.
MA-MEZO.
OKAY...

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D...
...DAD...
SO THERE ARE THREE OF THEM...
STOP COMPLAINING!!
BUT THAT'S BORING!!
TROMP TROMP
THAT LADY DOWN THERE HELPED ME AND MY FRIENDS BACK IN KOUGA.
OUR JOB IS TO GET RID OF THE IGA NINJA.
I DON'T CARE ABOUT THEIR PERSONALITY.
MAMEZO'S A NICE GUY TOO, AND...
SHUT UP.

SHHHK
SEE YOU LATER...!! ♪
I'M GOING TO GIVE MITSUHIDE YOUR MEDICINE NOW.
WHAT ABOUT ME?
YOU CAN GO TO SLEEP.
ONCE YOU'VE FINISHED THIS ASSIGNMENT, I'D LIKE TO MEET YOUR FRIEND.
HANZO, YOU WANT TO MEET WATARI?
NOT AS HANZO...
...BUT AS YOUR FATHER, MAMEZO.
OKAY!!

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USA!
H... HUH?
KAME'S BECOME SO PRETTY...
USA, WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUTSIDE AT A TIME LIKE THIS WITHOUT EVEN A DISGUISE?
OH! I WAS CHASING AFTER MYAAKO...
MYAAKO ?
SHUP
PLEASE WAIT HERE FOR A MINUTE.
IT'S A SIBLING OF THE CAT GREAT-GRANDPA HAS, BUT I'VE LOST TRACK OF IT...
WHOA!
JUMP
YOU'RE SLOWER THAN A TURTLE!
HEY, SLOW-WITTED KAME..
IS THAT REALLY KAME...?!
LET'S GO!
WHOA.
IT'S SLOWPOKE USAGI. .
HEY!
WAARGH
I'M GOING TO TELL GREAT-GRANDPA ABOUT THIS!!
STOP IT...!
MY NAME MEANS "RABBIT," BUT I'M STILL SLOW.
MAYBE I'M SLOW BECAUSE OF MY NAME...
OOH...
I'M GOING TO GIVE MYSELF A REALLY NICE NAME WHEN I BECOME A KUNOICHI.
THAT SLOW CRYBABY . THAT KAME USED TO BE .! IS SO DIFFERENT NOW.!!
SHA

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WE'RE FRIENDS...
WHY DO YOU HAVE TO TALK LIKE THAT TO ME?
I'M SORRY THAT I WON'T BE ABLE TO SEE YOU OFF.
I HAVE TO GO NOW.
KAME...
TAKE CARE, USA.
CAN'T TELL ME?
ARE YOU STILL MAD AT ME...?
KAME...

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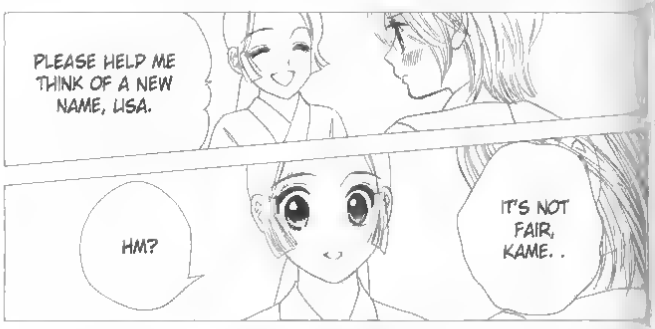
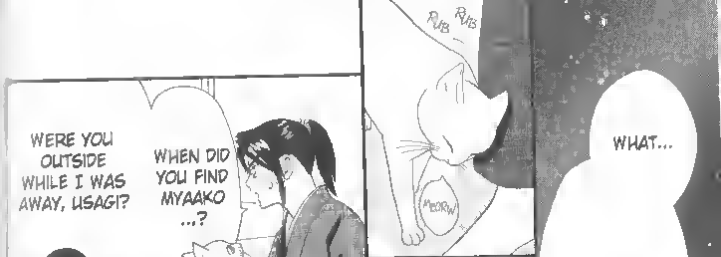


HOW COULD YOU GET QUALIFIED?! IT'S NOT FAIR!!
I WAS HER FRIEND...
YOU JUST PRETENDED TO BE SLOW, BUT YOU WERE PRACTICING BEHIND MY BACK, WEREN'T YOU?!



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GIVE ME ANY ASSIGNMENT YOU'VE GOT!!
I DON'T WANT TO STAY PUT AT HOME!!
"THERE IS AN ABANDONED TEMPLE AT THE FOOT OF THE MOUNTAIN THAT'S SOUTHWEST OF HERE."
"I NEED YOU TO CHECK THE ALIGNMENT OF THAT RICE."
"INSIDE THAT TEMPLE, YOU'LL FIND A LINE OF FIVE-COLORED RICE THAT WE USE TO SEND MESSAGES TO EACH OTHER."
I WANT TO CATCH UP TO KAME.
WHEN KAME HEADED OUT TO THE CAPITAL FOR HER ASSIGNMENT, I GAVE HER A GOOD-LUCK CHARM TO MAKE UP, BUT...
USAGI...
HANZO, PLEASE!!
...AND I COULDN'T HELP SAYING...
...ALL THOSE MEAN WORDS TO HER.
...BUT SHE BEAT ME AT GETTING QUALIFIED. FEELINGS OF FRUSTRATION AND MISERY BECAME MIXED UP INSIDE OF ME...

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UE-RIN'S WAY OF THE MANGA 20

All the award money I won from manga submissions as well as the pay I received for my debut manga went straight to my mother's bank account. I persuaded my mom to use that money for my private school tuition, so I finally succeeded in getting permission to apply to the art department. Around that time, I got another phone call from the editorial office telling me that although I was going to make my debut the one-shot that had won the debut award was too amateurish. They wanted me to redraw it, which really surprised me.

...THEN I'M SURE I'LL BE ABLE TO SHARE...
...ALL MY HAPPINESS AND SADNESS WITH HER.
IS THIS IT?
THE FIVE-COLORED RICE...
IF I'M ABLE TO CATCH UP TO HER...

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